

GENERAL NOTES

This report provides statistical profiles of foreign students from major countries in Asia, Europe, and North America¹ who earned doctoral degrees in science and engineering (S&E) fields at U.S. institutions. The countries represent 74 percent of all foreign doctoral recipients in S&E fields. Foreign doctoral recipients from other regions of the world (e.g., South America, the Middle East, and Africa) are not included in this report.

The statistical profiles included in this report contain two tables for each major country of origin in Appendix B. The first set of tables (B-1 through B-14) groups degrees by country and field between 1988 and 1996, a period of rapid growth in S&E doctorates earned by foreign students. These tables provide data on several characteristics of doctoral recipients: gender, visa status, sources of support, time to degree, planned location after Ph.D., and any definite employment plans in the United States. The second set of tables (B-15

through B-28) provides similar data for the years 1975, 1980, and 1985–96.

These data are used to analyze the growth of S&E doctoral degrees earned by foreign students and the students' plans to remain in the United States after graduation. Data on plans to stay in the United States are collected by the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED). A "plan to stay" means that a student intends to remain in the United States after graduation and a "firm plan to stay" means that a student has accepted a definite offer of a postdoctoral appointment or employment in the United States. The number of foreign doctoral recipients with firm plans to stay in the United States is a good indicator of those who actually stay² and is referred to in this report as a "stay rate." Summary tables used for this analysis (combining all countries from the three regions) are provided in Appendix A.

¹ This report contains data for the European countries of France, Germany, Greece, Italy, and the United Kingdom. In addition, data for several groupings—other Western European countries, Eastern European countries, Scandinavian countries, and Russia and former Soviet Republics—are included. The Asian countries covered in this report are those that supply the largest numbers of students—China, India, South Korea, and Taiwan. For North America, data for Canada and Mexico are included.

² Michael G. Finn, Leigh Ann Pennington, and Kathryn Hart Anderson, "Foreign Nationals Who Receive Science or Engineering Ph.D.s from U.S. Universities: Stay Rates and Characteristics of Stayers," Oak Ridge, TN: Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education, April 1995.